

CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The water vessel of claim 2,~~

A water vessel, comprising:

at least three closed gas containers fastened into close lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure and buoyancy for said vessel to float;

wherein said fastening means is tube fastening means and comprises a looped outer skin of sheet wrap material wrapping around said tubes and protecting said tubes from sunlight and from high speed water friction.

4. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim ~~2~~ 3, wherein said hull tubes have upwardly angling hull tube forward ends for defining a bow shape.

5. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim ~~4~~ 3, wherein said hull tubes have downwardly angling hull tube rearward ends.

6. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim ~~2~~ 3, wherein said hull tubes are laterally spaced apart from each other to increase the size of said hold.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~The water vessel of claim 2,~~
A water vessel, comprising:
at least three closed gas containers fastened into close
lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial
hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas
containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having
substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being
substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said
two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure
and buoyancy for said vessel to float;
wherein said hold comprises a hold framework.

8. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim ~~2~~ 3, wherein said at least three tubes are formed of one of rubber and rubberized cloth.

~~-10. 9. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 2,~~

~~additionally comprising~~

A water vessel, comprising:

at least three closed gas containers fastened into close lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure and buoyancy for said vessel to float;

and a hull shell fastened underneath and cradling and retaining said hull tubes for adding structural integrity to said vessel and for providing a durable hull of a shape suited to surface characteristics of a body of water to be crossed.

~~-11. 10. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 10-9,~~
wherein said hold comprises a rigid tube resting on top of said hull shell between said hull tubes.

~~-12. 11. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 2,~~

A water vessel, comprising:

at least three closed gas containers fastened into close lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure and buoyancy for said vessel to float;

wherein said at least three tubes are filled with lighter-than-air gas for increasing buoyancy and thereby reducing the draft of said vessel and reducing drag.

~~-13. 12. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 2-3,~~
wherein said tubes have tube walls and portions of said tube walls bordering said hold are flattened to increase hold volume and to permit said hold to substantially conform in shape to conventional cargo containers.

~~14. 13. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 2,~~
~~additionally comprising~~

A water vessel, comprising:

at least three closed gas containers fastened into close lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure and buoyancy for said vessel to float;

and an engine drivably connected to two counter-rotating propellers for propelling said water vessel.

~~15. 14. (Currently Amended) The water vessel of claim 2,~~
~~additionally comprising~~

A water vessel, comprising:

at least three closed gas containers fastened into close lateral proximity with fastening means to define an interstitial hold space between said containers defining a vessel hold, said gas containers comprising two hull tubes and a cover tube all having substantially circular cross-sections, said cover tube being substantially centered over and nesting on top of and between said two hull tubes, such that said hull tubes provide vessel structure and buoyancy for said vessel to float;

and an engine and a hydraulic system with a pump driven by said engine and a hydraulic cylinder with a rear thruster shaft extendable from said water vessel for abutting a dock stop structure during rear docking.

16. 15. (Canceled)

17. 16. (Canceled)